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DIRECTORATE OF
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*North Vietnam: The North Vietnamese Communist Party celebrated its 40th anniversary on 2 February with a show of unity.

Party First Secretary Le Duan held the spotlight and delivered the major speech of the day. The occasion provided a greater display of unity and of collective leadership than at any time since Ho's funeral. All politburo members currently in Hanoi were listed in their appropriate party ranking. Le Duan said little that was new but had something for everyone. He treated all important party policies and problems and associated himself with both the switch to increased political action and protracted war in the South as well as the necessity of getting on with the "building of socialism" in the North.

The party first secretary's long speech stressed tactical flexibility as one of the Communists' strongest assets. He went out of his way, for example, to justify significant shifts in Communist strategy--both in negotiations and on the battlefield--by referring to party history. He cited the quick switches in strategy in the 1946 period as a time when "President Ho skillfully steered the revolutionary boat out of dangerous reefs at first thought insurmountable."

Le Duan's speech was obviously intended to sharpen his image as the party first secretary. It is his first significant speech since Ho's death and his first pronouncement on the war in the South for some two years. It does not, however, shed any conclusive light on the state of the leadership or the standing of individual leaders in the post-Ho hierarchy.

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*Because of the shortage of time for preparation of this item, the analytic interpretation presented here has been produced by the Central Intelligence Agency without the participation of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, Department of State.

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Japan: Sohyo, Japan's largest labor federation, appears to be scaling down its plans for opposing renewal of the US-Japanese mutual security treaty this spring.

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The Japan Socialist Party, the largest opposition party, is closely associated with Sohyo. It would be seriously embarrassed by a failure to mount significant demonstrations against the treaty. The Socialists have no capability for mounting major demonstrations on their own.

Although both Sohyo and the Socialists played a key role in the massive antitreaty demonstrations in 1960, the Sohyo leadership is probably having second thoughts because of growing popular antipathy to leftist-sponsored violence and general satisfaction with the recent Okinawan reversion agreement. In addition, Sohyo's leaders are under pressure, because of increased competition from more economic-minded labor unions, to devote more attention to economic problems and less to ideologically oriented political struggles. In fact, expected large wage increases this spring may dull the appetite of Sohyo's rank and file for large-scale political strikes.



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NATO-Greece: NATO is again faced with the possibility of an open dispute on the Greek question.

The Defense Review Committee will soon consider a report expected to recommend that Allied countries grant military aid to Greece. This will create a problem for those members of the Alliance that are under domestic pressure to oppose such assistance in order to register their disapproval of the regime in Athens.

The report is almost certain to be opposed by Norway, whose parliament voted unanimously last December against arms shipments to Greece by NATO countries. Norway is likely to have the support of at least Denmark and the Netherlands in voting against the aid recommendation unless some compromise is reached.

Athens is not disposed to avoid a showdown on this question as it was last December when it withdrew from the Council of Europe. The Greek leaders have insisted that in the NATO military alliance the internal affairs of a member country are not a proper subject for debate and that if the Scandinavians persist in acting against this principle, it is up to the major NATO powers to dissuade them.

Although the acting secretary general has proposed to Greece and Norway that a procedural solution to this impasse might be found, neither Athens nor Oslo appears ready to accept a compromise at this time.

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Czechoslovakia: Party chief Husak risks losing some of the support he has been receiving from his native Slovakia because of his plans to recentralize party authority in Prague.

Husak has been a champion of federalization, designed to give the minority Slovaks greater autonomy as well as parity in national organizations. In a speech to the party plenum late last week, however, he reversed his position on grounds that the program had created serious problems during the year it was in effect. National rivalries, he said, impeded policy making and blocked implementation of the few decisions reached.

Husak's reversal is intended to ensure that the instruments of power are retained by the central party apparatus in Prague. The federalization of the party that had been planned for next year would have strengthened the Czech and Slovak regional parties. In all likelihood it would have enabled the numerically stronger Czech party bureau to dominate federal party meetings, including the next party congress. Husak may also have been responding to Soviet complaints that federalization of the party would have a divisive effect on the leadership. How Husak's retreat on this issue will affect his standing in Slovakia may be known after a central committee plenum there opens on Thursday.

Despite earlier promises, party leaders presented no master plan for economic progress at the plenum. Moreover, they called for a reversion to centralized economic authority and the virtual abandonment of economic reforms. These are two policies that had already been initiated. Central planning and control of the economy will sharply reduce the role of the Czech and Slovak republics and of individual enterprises in economic decision making.

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UN-Rhodesia: "Anticolonialist" countries at the UN are looking for new ways to increase international pressure on the Rhodesian Government.

In May 1968 the Security Council set up a seven-member committee to police the mandatory sanctions on virtually all trade with Rhodesia. The committee meets privately to investigate alleged violations of trade prohibitions, submitting reports to the Council and to appropriate UN members.

Since early last month Burundi's Terence Nsanze, then president of the Security Council, has been seeking to expand the committee to include his nation and Syria. Both countries are dissatisfied with the effectiveness of present measures. He has received support from the USSR and from the Afro-Asian members of the Council, but is meeting strong Western opposition.

Expansion of the committee in this manner would almost certainly lead to pressure to consider alleged violations in open meetings. Several members argued for open meetings when the committee was formed, anticipating that this would serve to force the implementation of sanctions. Following such an expansion there could also be moves to give the committee a mandate to urge Britain to take stronger actions against Rhodesia.

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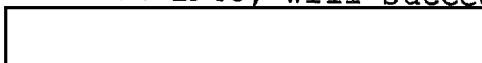
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Costa Rica: Opposition presidential candidate Jose "Pepe" Figueres won a landslide victory in Sunday's elections and appears to have carried his National Liberation Party (PLN) to a majority in the legislature. The Socialist Action Party, a Communist front, probably has won some representation in the legislature. Factionalism within the PLN, lingering animosities from the extremely bitter campaign, and possible right-wing reaction to the Communist showing promise a difficult postelection period. Figueres, who held the presidency from 1953 to 1958 and earlier headed the junta after the civil war of 1948, will succeed President Trejos on 8 May.



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Yugoslavia-USSR: Yugoslav news media are continuing to criticize the Soviet press for attacking "revisionism" and "nationalism." There was a brief hiatus at the time of Soviet Foreign Minister Gromyko's visit to Yugoslavia last September, but Moscow has since resumed its attacks in terms unacceptable to Yugoslavia, and Belgrade has begun to respond. The latest riposte came last Saturday when radio Zagreb strongly criticized recent articles in Soviet Russia and Red Star defending the so-called "Brezhnev doctrine" of limited sovereignty, which the Yugoslavs have denounced as a threat to their independence. The radio Zagreb editorial rejected the doctrine as "unacceptable" and "dangerous."



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UN-Cyprus: The proposed plan to reduce by 500 men the UN force in Cyprus (UNFICYP) is proceeding smoothly, and Secretary General Thant is expected to approve it soon. The Turkish Cypriot community has been told informally of the plan and has not objected so far. Because of Turkish Cypriot apprehension over Greek Cypriot terrorist activities, UNFICYP officials have shelved for the time being their intention to ask the Turkish Cypriots to dismantle the roadblocks bordering their enclaves.

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Egypt: Nasir's continuing frustration over the stalemate in the Middle East was apparent in his rather routine speech to a parliamentary conference in Cairo yesterday. In tones nearer sorrow than anger, Nasir reviewed the history of Israel's "aggression" against the Arabs and condemned the US for pretending to seek peace in the area while supporting Israel in its "campaign of terror." Nasir failed to give any hints on how Egypt hopes to combat the recent Israeli raids near Cairo and rather hollowly claimed that they "only strengthen the Egyptian people's determination."

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